The COMMONWEAL

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The Appointment to the Vatican

THE SENDING of Mr. Myron C. Taylor to the Vatican with what Mr. Arthur Krock of the *Times* approvingly calls "a watching brief" as President Roosevelt's personal representative, has met in the main an intelligent and generous response throughout the country. The logic and realistic good sense of the move make it one of the best examples thus far available of the President's known (though not always manifest) vision and courage before major issues. And whenever he displays these qualities, the people respond to them as if with an instinctive perception of their rightness. There is in our national history the record of diplomatic relations with the Vatican first assumed and then deliberately broken off; there is in addition a good deal of anti-Catholic suspicion and hostility, legacy of a less enlightened day, lingering beneath the surface of our common life. The Taylor appointment cuts across these in a sense. And yet present realities are so pointed and so singular that the President's forthright recognition of them has been enough to bring quiet and more, distinctly hopeful, acquiescence from most of the public. It is simply a fact that the unparalleled position of Catholicism as a unified, supranational religion, and hence as bearing a unique moral potential, has emerged today with unusual clearness. It is another fact that the United States and the Vatican are the two greatest powers outside (in their very different ways) the world conflict, and that this really establishes a bond between them in what the President calls their "parallel endeavors for peace and the alleviation of suffering."

Nays and Yeas

There have, however, been some dissenting voices, based upon the fear that the American principle of the separation of Church and State might be endangered by the President's action. The most insistent of these have been found in the undenominational Protestant *Christian Century*, which sees Mr. Taylor's appointment as a bid for the political support of Catholic voters and as a practical equivalent of the resumption of official Vatican relations. There is in this view, besides a deeply unfortunate animus, a good deal of error and confusion. Without discussing the desirability of diplomatic relations with the Vatican—an arrangement which the world's other major democracies have survived "unscathed"—it should suffice to point out that the President alone simply has not the power to initiate such relations. Archbishop Spellman clinched a point: "Nobody protests," His Excellency points out, our embassy "to Great Britain, though King George is head of the Church of England. Because we send an ambassador to the Emperor of Japan, who claims descent from the Son of Heaven, is anyone thoughtless enough to suppose that the appointment means a union of the Japanese religion and the United States government?" The Archbishop ends by citing the fact that should be conclusive: that the Papacy was one of the first states to accord recognition to our country, "and this when the separation of Church and State was recognized as an American principle." With no wish to question the good faith of the dissenters to the President's action, we ask them to scrutinize carefully both the fact involved and the bases of their own dissent. We are glad to record that the correspondence columns of the *Christian Century* itself carry many tokens of a more enlightened and, may we add, more Christian attitude. Spokesmen for the Presbyterian group have been especially notable in this regard. Indeed, we cannot do better than quote from the letter of Theodore F. Savage, Executive Secretary of the Presbytery of New York: "The action of the President . . . is another and striking recognition of the essential place that religion must play in life, and in human relations including the international. . . . Protestantism has no central head in an individual or official seat. . . . Just why, because of our divisions, it seems un-American to do everything possible to bring the influence of religion to bear upon world problems, even if it involves sending a representative to the head of only one of the religious bodies represented in this country, is hard to see."

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The Farmer's True Interests

Justice Is Very Blind

"IT IS more than ever important for farmers to have a government in Washington that is looking out for their interests." So President Roosevelt over the radio last week. Of course he is right, though one wonders whether that is the kind of government he has set up, despite the very real efforts and achievements of the New Deal agricultural policy. And after all the shenanigans in the Senate, adding nearly $300,000,000 to the Farm Bill, most of that money for "parity" payments and "conservation" payments, one begins to despair of ever finding a deeply realistic agricultural policy in the Halls of Congress. Of course the farmers need things; they need things that the federal government can well give them, or help them get—the elimination of tenantry, new scientific developments, guidance toward achieving their own independence, educational and medical assistance. However pleasant it may be to receive cash benefits, they constitute no possible permanent policy. As Henry Tetlow puts it in "On Medlock Farm," "Let every farmer produce his own needs. . . . Let him sell whatever surplus he has above his needs—and let the cities pay for those surpluses through the nose—or starve." That puts is rather crudely, but there is the farmer's winning trump card. Public and private policy—deliberately or not—have almost stolen it from him.

Migratory Labor Is a National Problem

California Is Aroused

THE MIGRANT FARM FAMILIES now stranded in California or headed there are at last the object of national concern. Judging from the excellent series of articles by Byron Darnton in the New York *Times,* the Okies and Arkies are victims of a vicious system of one-crop farming that leads to exhausted soils and to dust-bowls. Many have slid down the ladder from outright ownership to mortgaged farms to tenancy to seasonal employment. Then, urged on by the hopelessness of things at home and over-successful California real estate propaganda (not, it appears, by California help-wanted "ads"), thousands have packed their wretched belongings in dilapidated model T's and started west. If they did find work in the Golden Bear State, it was only for short periods and on terms dictated by the powerful Associated Farmers employers' organization. Living conditions à la "Grapes of Wrath" are the result.

Californians farm in a big business way. Many large-scale crops are perishable and therefore require huge squads of harvesters for very brief periods. The toughness of the employers and the tenseness of labor relations are laid directly to the fact that deadlocks might mean the loss of a whole year's perishable crop. The mass-production, food-factory system is wrong. But meanwhile something must be done to assist its victims. Californians themselves have organized Social Adjustments, Inc., which ultimately through a long-range rent and purchase scheme hopes to enable 25,000 non-relief families to build homes of their own near places of part-time employment and grow much of their own food. Carey McWilliams believes migrant workers should enjoy the social legislation benefits of urban industrial workers, that they should organize and bargain with Associated Farmers on even terms and that Federal Transient Service should be reestablished. Soil conservation and decent relief rates must keep additional Okies and Arkies from converging on California. And subsistence homesteading together with cooperative large-scale farming must enable migrant families to rehabilitate and stabilize their position. It is a job for citizen, social agency, municipality, state and nation.

The Smith Labor Law Amendments

Regress Versus Progress

THE ORIGINAL National Labor Relations Act was based on a fairly definitive national policy. It involved the endorsement of union organization and of collective bargaining, and the condemnation of acts on the part of employers which hinder them. It made the federal government positively interested in the working out of that policy. An "improving" amendment would be designed to make unionization and collective bargaining simpler, less full of fuss, and routinized in a way to lessen employers' complaints and grounds for complaint, and bickering between labor groups.

The Smith Committee which acted as jury, prosecuting attorney and now as judge, hurried to its proposal before either its own hearings or the House hearings or the Senate hearings were concluded—a proceeding which hardly corrects the "tumultous rush" for which the New Deal was rightly criticized. By separating the Labor Board's judicial, administrative and prosecuting functions, without regard to the FTC, the SEC, the FCC and the other agencies which combine like powers, the Smith group makes a misleading and unjustified attack on the NLRB.

By calling for law court rules of evidence in the fact-finding board hearings, the practical carrying out of the purposes of the old law are seriously slowed down and hindered. Allowing no board order for back pay covering more than six months is simply putting a premium on obstruction and dilatoriness by employers and threatening aggrieved employees with completely unjustifiable loss. No attempt is made to face realistically the problem of the proper bargaining unit. The

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NLRA could stand change and improvement; a policy to promote unionization and collective bargaining cannot stand the Smith Amendments. Much better to stop all this uncertainty and let the Wagner Act alone.

Questions for a Non-Combatant

From Sympathy To Action

ELSEWHERE in these pages Monsignor John A. Ryan admirably succeeds in narrowing the field of moral confusion about the war by a brilliant and incisive definition of terms and statement of principles. He finds that "honest and conscientious men are fully justified in hoping that victory will be with France and Britain." But this logical conclusion he develops a step further than we like to go: "non-combatants should desire the triumph of France and England." *Victory* and *triumph* are not necessarily synonymous. And since Monsignor Ryan admits that some of the Allied ends may not be good ends, it is surely questionable whether we as non-combatant individuals should desire their *triumph,* a degree of success that seems to imply the accomplishment of *all* their ends, good and bad.

But granting that non-combatants—specifically, Americans—may and even should have sympathy for the Allies as against the Nazis, would that sympathy justify our ceasing to be non-combatants, our active participation in war? Monsignor Ryan does not deal with that question, yet it is a question his article insistently raises. If one must answer it briefly, one must answer it crudely. We believe the answer is "no." He himself points out that while we may hope for a good end to a series of actions not in themselves all good, we would be wrong if we ourselves participated in what is blameworthy. Thus it is one thing to hope that Nazism will not win in Europe; it is a very different thing for us to go into the present, specific war against Nazism. Then again it is one thing to sympathize with the expressed aims of England and France: "the destruction of Hitlerism and the restoration of Poland and Czechoslovakia." It is quite another thing to decide whether simply those ends are likely to come, even with an Allied victory. Prophecy is dangerous, yet it looks like a safe bet that there will be no easy victory on either side in this war, and that indicates that the end in fact will be different from the ends desired now by either side. Quite apart from where our sympathies lie, we have a clear and separate duty to determine our own actions in accordance with a realistic national policy based upon justice. If the United States has no such policy, and we have none at present, then any action of ours with regard to the war will have no moral basis: we may be drawn in through an accident; we may stay out through luck or purely selfish isolationism.

Monsignor Ryan says that "with the position . . . that in our day war is practically never justified because of its awful consequences, I have considerable sympathy." Perhaps that gives us a hint of what national policy to work toward. We sympathize with the general aim of "destroying Hitlerism" (in addition to a lot of other ideologies). Have we not a duty to discover, if we can, means other than war to achieve this end? Using those means might so irritate others as to lead them to choose war as a weapon against us, but that is a risk attached to every policy of positive action. Those means, if we honestly seek them, will involve radical changes in our own internal polity as much as in our international line.

Dramatic War Week

"As You Were"

IN SPITE of the detailed published accounts of all that was thought and said in a room in the Vatican when Ribbentrop was granted an audience by the Pope we, in this office, do not feel qualified to comment upon a conversation which was intended to be private and which, if only for us, has remained so. As for the German envoy's dealings with Italy's King and with Mussolini, all that can conscientiously be said is that the official communiqué issued by the Italian Government stresses the fact that conversations were carried on within the frame, not only of the Alliance between Germany and Italy, but also of the "accords"—one of which is military. Nothing has happened to change our conviction that Italy is non-belligerent primarily because the original plan with Germany assigned her that strategic position. Italy is held in reserve as a threat against France and against what action the Allies might contemplate in the Balkans.

In the North, Finland after fourteen weeks is unable to continue a resistance which has won world sympathy. She is left entirely disorganized, provisionally independent; her people are freed from violent death; they are exposed to misery and perhaps to starvation. If they showed courage during the fighting, they will need it in greater measure even to attempt to rebuild their country.

Results of Finland's defeat have been enormously exaggerated. From headlines and strategists one would gather the impression that the Allies had lost the war. As a fact the Allies are back where they were before the Russians invaded Finland. Admitting a certain loss of prestige in the Balkans through their inability to protect a country which was doing their work, this loss is compensated by the fact that Russian aid to Germany has been retarded for fourteen weeks, and by the Allied refusal to make the northern campaigns a major one, which would have meant that they accepted the terrain chosen by the adversary. The war remains as it was in the beginning.

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Confusions About the War

A veteran student of society presents his own views on discussions of the ethics of the present war.

By John A. Ryan

THIS SOMEWHAT ponderous title refers to certain articles and speeches dealing with the moral aspects of the war between the Allies and Nazi Germany. Some of these confusing and unsatisfactory productions have appeared in THE COMMONWEAL. A great part of their defects is due mainly to loose terminology, and to an unprecise use of terms which have been standardized. The terms "holy war," "just war," "unjust war," "immoral methods," "motives," "ends," "causes" have been too frequently employed in such a way as to exemplify one or both of these faults. Let me interject here that in this article I shall try to be as objective and impartial as is humanly possible.

The concept of just war

It has been vigorously denied that the war between the Allies and Germany is a "holy war." In one sense, no war is holy; in another sense the present war may be as holy as some others that have been widely so designated. The term "unjust war" has likewise been used unprecisely and ambiguously. Considered as a whole, as a two-sided performance, every war is unjust. In the words of the distinguished German ethical writer, Theodore Meyer, S.J.: *"Bellum nequit esse, objective loquendo, ex utraque parte formaliter et materialiter justum."* ("Objectively speaking, war cannot be on both sides formally and materially just.") Obviously, if one party is defending genuine rights, the other is violating rights. On the other hand both parties may be acting wrongfully and unjustly inasmuch as both have neglected the use of negotiation and other peaceful means which might readily have induced them to refrain from going to war.

The extreme pacifist position, that war as such is always wrong because it involves violence, does not deserve formal discussion. With the position of some recent Catholic authorities, that in our day war is practically never justified because of its awful consequences, I have considerable sympathy; but if Hitler and his government intend to substitute paganism for Christianity not only in Germany but in the foreign territories which they have annexed in the last two years, and if they are aiming at world domination, then I have no hesitation in saying that a successful war against this immoral Nazi program would be the lesser evil. In other words, such a war would be justified despite the enormous ensuing destruction of life and property.

On the assumption that even today war may be a smaller evil than its alternative, it is clear that one of the contestants may be either wholly right or mainly right, whereas the other may be wholly wrong or mainly wrong. The former may be defending rights of the greatest magnitude and seeking an end that is morally good. Clearly, that party, that state, is justified in making war, even if it is aiming at some minor unworthy ends in addition to the principal good end, while the ends pursued by its opponent are mainly evil; and all honest men may legitimately hope that the former will be successful. To be sure, no state or people is justified in seeking evil ends, whether by war or otherwise, and any such that are now cherished ought to be eliminated during the war, or at least at the peace table afterwards.

A similar statement is applicable to the nation which is pursuing a just end, but by the aid of unjust means. Even if such a nation refuses to discard the immoral means, honest men may properly hope for its success; for the opposing state may be equally guilty of immoral methods or may seek ends which would include greater moral evil than that involved in the immoral means used by its antagonist. The question again is of the lesser evil. A state is obliged to avoid immoral means as well as to eschew immoral ends, but if it refuses to do so, honest men may lawfully wish it success so long as its antagonist practices or pursues a distinctly greater combination of immoral means and ends. The balance of evil is on the side of the latter; the balance of good on the side of the former.

The question of means

The distinction between what the belligerents are morally obliged to avoid in the conduct of a war, and what non-combatants are permitted to desire as its outcome, is fundamental. To use immoral means is a sin for the users; but non-combatants, who have no control over the war and who do not approve of the evil means, may lawfully desire the attainment of the end toward which the fighting is directed. To rejoice in the

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good effects of sinful actions, while withholding approval of their sinful causes, is morally permissible. To hope for good effects from the disapproved sinful means is likewise free from moral censure. The attitude of non-combatants toward the evil means is one thing; their attitude toward the good ends or effects is quite another thing.

The man who says: "Both belligerents are using unlawful means; therefore, neither deserves to win," may be correct so long as he confines his attention to the moral deserts of the contending parties; but when he goes on to say: "therefore, it is wrong to desire, and I do not desire, the victory of either," is not only unrealistic but defective in his moral reasoning. To be sure, one can properly wish that the combatants will cease fighting and adjust the dispute by negotiation; but so long as the fighting continues, the honest man who understands moral principles and their application will objectively and painstakingly compare the ends sought, respectively, by the two belligerents and give his sympathy and good wishes to the one that is pursuing good ends, or the larger volume of good ends, or, at least, to the one whose victory will involve the smaller volume of evils.

Motives and ends

It has been asserted that, even though both means and ends be good, the conduct of a war may be evil on account of the motive. This is a misleading distinction, for all motives are in some sense ends. We think of the end as a good which is sought through action, of the motive as the reason or consideration which moves the will to act; but this reason or consideration is itself an end which the agent intends to reach or realize. Martineau points out that every motive is either "an impulse from behind or a conceived good." A "conceived good" is clearly an end. Even when "an impulse from behind" has only internal existence, as hatred or desire for revenge, it is directed to an end to be realized, namely, the mental satisfaction which is expected to result from the attainment of the external end.

The motive may be identical with the principal end; or it may provide a distinct reason for seeking that end; or it may lie beyond the principal end, so that it is proximate in intention but ultimate in attainment, or it may be the really dominant end to which the ostensibly principal end is a means. In every case, the motive describes something desired as the effect, or one of the effects, of the action. Therefore, it is an end; it is an objective pursued by the agent.

In his discussion of the lawfulness of war, Saint Thomas Aquinas does not used the word "motive" (*motivum*) at all, but the word "intention." The third of the conditions which he specifies as essential to a just war is a "right intention" (*recta intentio*); that is, an intention to "promote good or to avert evil." By "intention" he evidently means "end" or "purpose" (2a, 2ae, q.40, a.1). I do not recall any modern Catholic authority who uses the term "motive" in discussing the conditions of a just war. They all follow the example of Saint Thomas and stress "intention." Following Saint Augustine, some of these authors cite as examples of a wrong intention, "the desire to harm, the cruelty of revenge, a vindictive spirit, the lust of power" and other objectives which lie within the mind rather than in external objects. Nevertheless these are all objects which the belligerent wants to realize, even though they are not in the external world. Therefore, they are ends, and very often they powerfully impel the belligerent to seek the external objectives.

For the sake of clearness and precision the term "motive" should be excluded from discussions of the morality of war, just as it is excluded by the moralists from their enumeration of the elements or determinants of the morality of all human acts. These elements are specified as "object," "end" and "circumstances." When the moral treatises mention "motive" in this connection, they use it merely as an explanatory synonym of "end."

Evidently a warring nation may pursue several ends simultaneously. If all of these are morally good except one, the latter will render the war illicit. That is to say, a belligerent will be guilty of immoral conduct so long as he includes this unlawful purpose among the ends to which he is directing the war. Nevertheless, non-combatants may licitly desire victory for this belligerent nation because of the very important good ends which will then be attained. In the sum total of effects the good may well outweigh the evil. This is an obvious application of the well known rule of "double effect." Moreover there may be good ground for hoping that the evil end will not be pursued or realized after the war is over. Again, the other belligerent may be seeking ends so much worse than the objectives of his antagonist that his success would be an unlawful object of desire. Of course one may properly and reasonably hope that neither party will be victorious, that their dispute will be adjusted by fair negotiation, but we are here considering a situation where the fighting is bound to end only in what is called a complete victory.

Applying the foregoing argument to the conflict between the Allies and the Nazis, we find the moral situation to be about as follows: The Allies are aiming at the destruction of Hitlerism and the restoration of liberty to Poland and Czechoslovakia. Both of these are good ends. The second is obviously so. That the first is likewise good follows from the design and plan of Hitlerism to dominate and enslave a great part of the world,

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as shown in Hitler's "Mein Kampf" and in Rauschning's "The Revolution of Nihilism." Assume for a moment that the Allies are also pursuing an evil end, such as dividing Germany into a number of small states or imposing upon it terms of peace as iniquitous as the worst of those in the Treaty of Versailles. Of course there is no evidence that the Allies intend to commit either of these outrages, but, even so, these evil effects of an Allied victory would be outweighed by the good effects; for the latter would include not only the freedom of many nations from tyrannical oppression, but the ending of the Nazi program of religious persecution and general paganism. Hence honest and conscientious men are fully justified in hoping that victory will be with France and Britain. On the other hand no person is objectively justified in desiring success for the Nazis. A Hitler victory would produce all the evil effects specified above, without adequately compensating good effects. That the Nazis desire to destroy the Christian religion and substitute their own brand of paganism is abundantly clear from the Pastorals of the German Bishops, the insidious persecution of religion in Germany and the horrible persecution in Austria, Poland and the land of the Czechs.

Just cause

In the discussion of the moral aspects of the present war, a lack of precision also characterizes some uses of the word "cause." Occasionally it is employed to describe any factor, no matter how remote or indirect, which has exerted some influence in bringing about the conflict. For example the harsh and unjust conditions imposed by the Treaty of Versailles, the conquest of enormous territories by Britain and France and the destruction of Poland by Germany are cited as causes of the war between the Allies and the Nazis. Undoubtedly the first of these was a cause, inasmuch as it contributed to the rise of Hitler; the second, in so far as it may have moved Hitler to seize the countries east of Germany, and the third, since it impelled the Allies to begin the war against der Fuehrer. Nevertheless these and many other alleged "causes" do not, by themselves, prove that either belligerent is waging a just war. When the moralists declare that one of the necessary conditions of a righteous war is a "just cause," they are referring to *final* cause, not to efficient cause or to any event or factor which has exercised its causality in the past. They have in mind an event or condition which is not yet realized, but which a belligerent is striving to realize. A past event may be a psychological cause of war, and the endeavor to correct the evil effects of that event may constitute a just cause. That is what the Allies mean when they declare that the destruction of Poland was the immediate cause of their entrance into the war. The "just" cause for them is involved in the effort to undo this wrong, to restore Poland.

In other words, a "just cause" is correlative to, if not identical with a "just end." Catholic writers rarely, if ever, use the term "end." They deal with that topic under the head of "just cause." This is how men understand the matter when they say, "our cause is just." When men use this phrase to characterize their war-making, they have in mind their war-objectives. Their main thought is not about factors and events which have provoked them to begin the war.

So I repeat that past events and factors cannot by themselves decide whether war is just or unjust. This question can be answered only when we examine the ends which the belligerents are, respectively, pursuing. To be sure, these ends may be dependent upon or affected by past events and factors. For example the Allies were moved to enter the war by the destruction of Poland and one of their aims is to rectify that wrong.

Some minor examples of terminological and ethical confusion will be dealt with briefly before this article is brought to a close. They consist mainly of objections or other statements made by persons who do not accept the conclusion set down in the immediately preceding paragraph.

It is occasionally asserted that the welfare of Christianity and Christian civilization are not among the concerns cherished or the ends sought by the Allies. Aside from its crude and manifest uncharity, this charge is irrelevant to the pertinent moral issues. The prevention of tyrannical domination and the restoration of Poland are of themselves adequate to provide the Allies with a just cause. There can be no doubt that they are deliberately seeking these ends. Moreover, the saving of Christianity and of Christian civilization is involved in a victory by the Allies, whether or not it is in their thoughts and intentions. Therefore it constitutes a direct reason why noncombatants should desire the triumph of France and Britain.

An equally frequent dissent from the proposition that the Allies have a just cause takes this form: the Allied-Nazi conflict is merely the latest instance of the centuries-old operations of "power politics." In other words, it is merely a struggle for supremacy between two groups of European powers. This is pretty superficial. The assertion that the war is only a contest for power-supremacy evades entirely the moral issue. It does not face the question: "In case of victory, which of the contesting groups would utilize their supremacy for human welfare and righteous policies, and which for contrary purposes?" Honest men who use their intelligence will not evade this ethical inquiry. It is fundamental.

Other dissenters assert that the wrongs com-

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mitted by the Allies throughout history are as great as, if not greater than, those which the Nazis have perpetrated or will perpetrate. Hence, they say, "we are willing to permit Hitler to continue on his devastating course." As this contention is a particularly shallow and obvious case of assuming that "two wrongs make a right," it does not deserve serious consideration.

Finally, we come to the position of those who hold that the Allies should be punished for their numerous international crimes, and that Hitler is "the boy that will do it," if he is victorious. Hence his cause is just. The obvious reply is that Almighty God has not commissioned *der Fuehrer* to enforce the principle of retribution in the present situation. Neither he nor any other ruler has authority to act as the viceregent of God, in order to repair the violated moral order. Even with regard to its own citizens, or subjects, a state has no business to exact atonement or expiation for sinful acts. That is the function of God alone. The object and the justification of civil punishment is simply to deter wrongdoing for the sake of the common good, with some attention to the reformation of the wrongdoer. It is even clearer that one state should make war upon another only to prevent evil, never to impose retribution or to repair the moral order when it has been violated.

The main propositions and conclusions stated in the foregoing paragraphs may be summarized as follows: no war can be just on both sides; in some wars both sides may be acting unjustly. Notwithstanding the use of unjust means or the pursuit of some unjust ends by a belligerent, a noncombatant may lawfully desire victory for that belligerent as the lesser evil. In describing the conditions of a righteous war, the word "motive" is almost always unnecessary and is sometimes misleading. The term "end" is more satisfactory. A "just cause" is practically identical with a "just end." That the Allies have a just cause is proved by the ends which they are seeking and the good effects which are bound up with their triumph, and also by the enormous evil effects which would derive from their defeat. Some of the reasons offered to justify an attitude of mental neutrality, or even of sympathy with the Nazis, are shallow, unrealistic and ethically invalid.

Lent Over the World

Mortification and withdrawal have their purpose in a worldly world.

***By* Richard Flower**

HAPPIER a society that keeps a Lent than the most magnificent Utopia that knows none. For Lent is in the very nature of things: "die to become" is a law which permeates creation. Death is one of the dread effects of primeval sin, to be sure, but life from death is the divine counterplan to that first baneful effect. The yearly cycle of the seasons has its counterpart in the death and resurrection of the Redeemer, and so in the Lent and Easter of His Mystical Body. A Utopia, being the device of man for attaining perfect happiness, as often as not reckons only with the good in creation, not with the bad; to that extent it is unreal and unrealizable. The law of death issuing from original sin is the bugaboo of all Utopias; they faint and fail. "Come now," they all say with voluble optimism, "let us devise a way to happiness," and whether they capitalize the omnicompetent State (wherein individuals forfeit their personality and liberty) or the laissez-faire of liberalism (wherein liberty and individualism swiftly run into tyranny and anarchy), they ultimately faint and fail.

The Christian observance of Lent was the dynamic following of our Lord into the desert by the whole body of the faithful. As season gives place to season and as Christ goes year by year over the mysteries of His historic career, so His Mystical Body follows its Head into all moments of His life and Death. A thorn-crowned Head of an unmortified Body would be meaningless.

Whereas the utopias idealize nature (especially human nature), lending it unwarranted natural capacities for self-perfection, the Christian Society, regarding men as lying *vulneratus in naturalibus,* keeps its feet firmly on the earth. After all it is God's earth, fashioned to His praise, and it would seem that man loses his balance and his senses when he breaks that contact and begins to talk noisily about ideologies and master races and living room. The Christian Society, since it is but the extension of the Incarnation, is the meeting place of Heaven and earth; two orders of being, the natural and the supernatural, are there in constant intercourse. Nature without grace is maimed (*vulneratus*), and yet grace builds only upon nature. The realism of Christianity holds the two in close union.

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The coming of Lent over the world recalls the dust of which we are and to which we shall return. *Nulla palma sine pulvere.* Die to become! Lent over the world is not an artificial pall of gloom intended to dull life, but a veritable shower of blessing to draw out new and more abundant life. Otherwise the penance and the pain, the fasting and the sacrifice would be vapid, lacking sense. The farmer breaks and harries the hard-baked crust so that showers may reach down to the roots of the plant. The function of plow and harrow is performed in the Body of Christ by pain which we offer in union with His pain—the pain of Desert and Temptation, of Penance and Self-mastery, of Betrayal and Crucifixion. Thus is filled up the tale of Christ's passion in His militant members.

Strangely intertwined with the Redemptive action of Christ which led Him into the Desert and back into the turmoil of urban life is the idea of going forth into exile. "My kingdom is not of this world." "Go forth out of thy country"—God speaks to Abram—"and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee." "And he went out, not knowing whither he went," is Saint Paul's comment. "For we have not here a lasting city: but we seek one that is to come." "Thus there exist two different countries [*civitates*], opposed one to the other, in that some live according to the flesh, others according to the spirit." (Saint Augustine, *De Civitate Dei,* XIV, 4.)

Lent manifests a great migration of souls going forth out of the haunts of their selfishness to follow Jesus into a kingdom not of this world. There are two aspects of this urge towards exile: the first is the corporate aspect—the whole Christian Society enacting with Christ the tragic action of His passion and death (going forth without the gate to die); the second is the voluntary act of the individual members, dying to self in the effort to live unto Christ. The Christian man thus epitomizes in himself the action of the whole Mystical Body, since he may never, without cutting himself off, act other than as a living member of Christ. Hence, the going forth from the familiar haunts of country, enjoined upon Abraham, who took family and chattels with him, is a type of what happens to the whole Christian Society as Lent comes over the world. There is a withdrawal from the ordinary concerns of life to reflection on the pains of Christ's suffering and death; a retrenchment on self, by mortification and renewed consecration; a turning away from the many to the One, from the physical to the spiritual, from the circumference to the center. "What going forth is greater," asks Saint Ambrose, "than going forth from one's self?"

Exile to the Desert sounds dreadful to the urbane of any century. Yet the moral victory was won by Christ in the Desert, and there is the battle-ground of all who profess and call themselves Christians.

Dead exile

Exile to the Desert meant to the Christians of the first centuries one thing: the fast. This note has penetrated Lent once and for all time, so that Lent and fast are almost synonymous. All religions worthy the name teach fasting. The Jewish religion had an intricate code of laws concerning fasts, and the early Christians beheld a forty days' fast set in the midst of Christ's redemptive act. How they regarded the fast is clear from the liturgy of the early Church. The fast early embraced both physical and spiritual strictures. These are kept before us by the ever-recurring refrain in the Liturgy: "this solemn fast, ordained for the healing of both soul and body"; "that the observance which we show forth in our bodies, we may be able to practice with sincerity of heart." It is clear that the fast comprised a two-fold discipline and that the exterior works were to be, so to speak, sacramental of the interior works, so that Pharisaism should ever be banished from the faithful. That the interior works should never be divorced from exterior austerities is equally patent. The Church has faithfully maintained the two, moreover, in close relationship. The universal charge of her bishops at the entrance to Lent sufficiently shows that the physical fast is real and arduous and universally incumbent, even when for reasons of age, profession, weakness she may generously offer dispensations. The careful observance of Lent will ever be, therefore, foolishness and a stumbling-block to many people. It is the ascetic principle which irks, and the Church is the one last stronghold wherein that principle obtains.

It is the fast which best brings before us the ascetic principle of self-mastery. Its value is not the value of going without this or that, but precisely the value of mastering self. The very fact that our appetites rebel at the notion shows their undisciplined character. The child at table begins to ask, not for a sensible meal founded on sound reasons of hygiene, but for various things that are an immediate temptation to the appetite. The adult is not markedly different save that he preserves a certain order in indulgence. The principle of fasting is that he should from time to time cut across the inclination of appetite. So man gains the mastery over the animal side of his nature and shows himself a member of Christ and the child of God.

It is clear from her writings that the mind of the Church regards Lent as far more precious to the soul than to the body. The actual practice of the ascetic life really carries one much farther than these surface matters of a physical nature. It applies in particular to the disposition of time

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and the ruling of daily actions. The "regular life" of the Christian Society, corporate and organic with the life of the Body of Christ, stands as a norm for all organisms; the family, the school, the state may well learn a lesson from it. Families are disorderly because we let them be; because we do not face the initial trouble of making them orderly. Life has a tendency to get out of order, nowhere more than at its very source, and control means the rescuing of the life from disorder and sin, and lifting it to a level of order and sanity and possible sanctity. That is precisely the reason for the insistence on the ascetic principle.

Penance

The discipline of penance is signalized at the very start of Lent by Shrove Tuesday. Like all the sacraments, penance is a door of access to God. It is also a recognition by the *societas christiana* of its share in the guilt of human sin and of its need to go continually to the fountain of grace, the Second Baptism. As Lent, like a celestial body, moves to its zenith, the tragic consequence of man's sin becomes evident:

> The Cross shines forth in mystic glow;
> Where He in flesh, our flesh Who made,
> Our sentence bore, our ransom paid.

The mystery of iniquity is consummated here where man in open rebellion against his God crucifies the Incarnate Son. One feels the tremendous power that evil is as one looks at those human beings who are body and soul wholly under its dominion. But now

> Fulfilled is all that David told
> In true prophetic song of old!
> Amidst the nations God, saith he,
> Hath reigned and triumphed from the Tree.
> O Tree of beauty!

From the moment a new freedom is within the reach of men, the freedom which comes to them through their participation in the Redemption wrought for them by God. Our Lord Jesus Christ is arrived at the zenith; here at the top He could look back and say, "To this end came I into the world," to save sinners.

We can be unendingly thankful for that. The door to absolution is open forevermore, for the curse of man's sin has been lifted by a Man to the arms of the Cross. Though we "are continually afflicted because of our transgressions," yet we "may be delivered by the Passion of God's only-begotten Son"; before our feet in the path that runs out into infinity.

The discipline of penance is not the primary business of Christianity, though it will always be necessary as long as men deliberately reject the known will of God. Lent is not the entire year, but only forty days of penitential discipline. In other words, the action of the Body of Christ is not exhausted in the negative work of dealing with sin. Christianity is primarily a positive action for the bringing about and development of the relation of the soul with God in the state of union. Christian experience is a constant process of adjustment, a constantly growing experience. It is easy to see this in the concrete by taking up the life of almost any saint. One can easily trace the growth of Saint John from the young fisherman, fiery, impatient, who wished to call down fire from heaven upon his adversaries as Elias did, and gained the rebuke: "You know not of what spirit you are," to the mature and supremely calm and simple experience which is reflected in the Gospels and Epistles. Saint Paul and Saint Augustine are even more striking examples of Christianity as a vital growing experience. They both knew the discipline of repentance, but having done "the first works" they went on to perfection. This remains the primary fact: that Christianity is a positive life and a never-ending, inexhaustible adventure.

The key to this new adventure is man's new relation to the whole redeeming action of God, wherein Lent holds such an important place. His life is hid with Christ in God and his conversation is in heaven. A new freedom is within the reach of men, the freedom which comes to them through their participation in the redemption wrought for them by God. That He wrought this by His Fast and Prayer, His agony and bloody sweat, His Passion and Precious Death is only to say that Lent is a necessary stage in the life of the Christian Society. We go into the Desert, we fast and pray, we leave self-interest in the interests of the Body, whose life can never be a private matter because it is the life of the Son of God, in whom we live and move and have our being.

The Moment

Bring all the mind's intensity
  To bear upon a flower:
Eternity, infinity
  Can blaze there for an hour.

What are the ages that are past
  But endless wastes of sand?
Hold, just so long as it can last,
  This beauty in your hand.

It blooms no redder from the tomb
  Of Caesar than his slave's;
Indifferent to either doom
  In the light wind it waves.

Yet Caesar, blazing for his hour,
  Stooping from pride, might see
Such beauty, rather than his power,
  Mirror infinity.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

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An Evening with the Mobilizers

By LAWRENCE PHELAN

ONE THURSDAY evening a while back (the day Fritz Kuhn announced that he was being persecuted), I attended a meeting of an organization in the Bronx called "The Christian Mobilizers." It was held in the Tri-Boro Palace, a grimy three-story structure at 137th Street and Third Avenue just north of the Harlem River and, as the name would imply, close to the Triborough Bridge.

There was a police car outside and eight or ten uniformed cops were standing on the sidewalk. I climbed two flights of steps to the hall. It was painted dirty green with plaster showing through where the paint had chipped off. Fluted columns and ornate mirrors, once gold, decorated the walls. The floor was covered with sawdust. There was a low stage draped in black, fitted in meeting-hall fashion with a row of chairs painted orange and two small speakers' tables at the front. Each table had a poster tacked to the legs with "JOIN THE CHRISTIAN MOBILIZERS" in large black letters. There was a man in khaki trousers adjusting a microphone in the center of the stage. Posters similar to the ones on the stage were tacked on the gilded pillars; others read "BUY CHRISTIAN" and "END CHRISTIAN OPPRESSION." There was also a poster in the rear of the stage announcing dances on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings, and one over each door to the stage, advertising beer and soft drinks for sale downstairs.

The hall was gradually filling up. The crowd was poorly dressed, the average age being thirty-five to forty. The men were uncertain looking and rather quiet, the women slatternly, boisterous and strident. They looked as though they were there for a purpose. They were typically small tradesmen, artisans, office clerks, with their wives. In the rear of the hall were two long tables. One, presided over by a wispy middle-aged woman with spectacles, held piles of booklets, the group's official organ *The Christian Mobilizer, American Nationalist Weekly* and Father Coughlin's *Social Justice*. The booklets bore such titles as "The Talmud Speaks" and "Liberation."

The other table, around which a small group of men were clustered, had on it several pairs of men's shoes. The men were discussing an article in the *World-Telegram*, but they stopped talking when they saw me. I asked if the shoes were for sale and was told yes, for $4.40 a pair plus postage from Brockton, Massachusetts. They were fine shoes, well made, by a Christian manufacturer and Christian labor. I picked one up. They were ordinary, machine-made shoes, such as can be bought anywhere in the city for four dollars or less. I was told later that the man who sold them was not connected with the Mobilizers, but displayed his wares at all gatherings held in that hall.

I wandered around the hall and was coldly inspected by small groups of people who stopped conversing whenever I approached. I made discreet inquiries here and there of those who didn't appear to be openly hostile, and learned that there was to be a debate between the National Leader, Mr. Joseph E. McWilliams, and a lawyer named McDonough, head of a newly formed "Tolerance Group," and that some of McDonough's followers were to be present.

Several young men about nineteen, in white shirts and black ties, with blue armbands marked "CM" in white, were strolling around shouting: "Everybody take seats. Lotsa seats up front. Everybody take seats." I bought a copy of *The Christian Mobilizer* and took a seat on the side, in what was then the last row of hard wooden seats. Later, as the hall filled up, more seats were added.

The public address system had been put in order, and the "Washington Post March" was blaring scratchedly from the loudspeaker. I glanced at *The Christian Mobilizer*. It was an eight-page paper cheaply printed, with a white cross encircled by stars on a round black shield at the top of the page. The headline read: "F. D. R. DESTROYS FREE SPEECH" above an article by Joseph E. McWilliams, alleging the refusal of Washington authorities, at the instigation of the President, to allow him and his followers to hold a public meeting during a recent visit to the Capitol.

On the second page was a cartoon showing King George anl Queen Elizabeth conversing with Mayor LaGuardia and Governor Lehman. LaGuardia pats Lehman's head as the Governor speaks to their Majesties: "You called it once 'New England'—and you lost it. . . . We don't call it 'New Palestine'—but we'll make it the PROMISED LAND!"

Typical headlines throughout the paper: "Reader Calls Attention to Kosherized Press"; "Mobilizer to Sponsor 'Coughlin Ball' "; "Refujews Given Preference"; "The Highly Un-American 'American' Labor Party"; "Court Convicts Christian Son of Councilman"; "Equality Jewish Style."

Boxes, in heavy type, advised "BUY FROM CHRISTIANS ONLY" and "THINK CHRISTIAN—ACT CHRISTIAN AND VOTE CHRISTIAN."

When I had finished reading, I saw that the hall was filling up. Directly in back of me, I saw three well-dressed young couples whom I took to be Jewish members of the tolerance group. The people around them stared rather hard and muttered among themselves, but made no attempt to molest them.

Two of the white-shirted young men were draping an American flag over the dance poster on the stage.

There was a flurry of excitement around the entrance and the crowd vigorously applauded a lean, white-haired man in a dark suit who made his way smilingly down the aisle to the stage. A fleshy young man in a chocolate-colored suit and dark blue shirt came to the microphone and introduced him as "James Stuart, the leader of our group in Manhattan." The white-haired man spoke slowly and deliberately, in a rough, forceful manner, reminiscent of Alfred E. Smith. The gist of his remarks was that the tolerance people either did not understand, or deliberately misrepresented the policies of the Mobil-

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izers, that the Mobilizers were, in short, merely 100 percent Christian Americans.

"The speakers at the tolerance meetings," he boomed, "label us as Fascists, as Nazis, and as the stooges of Hitler. I will now tell you this—the Christian Mobilizers are against Nazism in America one hundred percent. We are against Fascism in America one hundred percent. We are FOR Christian Americanism one hundred percent. [Loud cheers and applause from the audience.] But we say this, that if the people of Germany . . . want Nazism . . . that . . . is their business! [Here the applause was frantic.] AND . . . if the people of Italy . . . want Fascism . . . THAT . . . is their business. And we do not believe that the President of the United States has any right to dictate to any European nation what form of government they should have."

He went on to say that they advocated "Buy Christian," but that they were not anti-semitic—that they had no fight with the Jews because of their religion, and that the freedom of religion was guaranteed in the Constitution which they support.

At this point a well-built, fashionably-dressed, vigorously handsome man in his early thirties strode down the aisle with three other men. The speaker paused, the audience rose to its feet, cheering wildly, whistling and stamping. Those near the aisle reached out and patted the well tailored shoulders. Joseph E. McWilliams smiled and nodded to his followers and march onto the stage. There followed much handshaking and whispered conversation. Then while two of the white-shirted "Storm Troopers" dressed the sides of the stage, one with an American flag and the other with the blue silk banner of the Mobilizers, the leader from Manhattan finished his speech and relinquished the microphone to the chairman of the debate—a Mr. Walsh.

Mr. Walsh announced that he had the distinct pleasure (laughter from the crowd and scattered boos) to present Mr. Henry McDonough of the tolerance group who would debate with "Our Leader, Joe McWilliams," on the subject of tolerance. "He has come here" he said, "voluntarily, in the spirit of sportsmanship because he feels he is right. We must be willing to concede that he is just as sincere in his views as Joe McWilliams." ("He's a Jew stooge," a woman shouted.) "We all know he's wrong," the Chairman continued. "Our Leader, Joe McWilliams, will prove that when he speaks. But we want you to give him a good reception and to refrain from any outbreaks. I know this will be difficult. I know how you feel about it; I feel the same way. But please refrain from causing any disturbance. Will Mr. McDonough please come up on the stage?"

Mr. McDonough progressed to the stage through a raking fire of boos, hisses and catcalls. He was a tall, average-looking man of about thirty-five. He had a well-meaning, self-conscious smile, and looked rather uncomfortable. He shook hands with Mr. McWilliams and Mr. Walsh, and sat down while Mr. Walsh finished his introduction. Then he rose and went to the microphone.

When he spoke, I was once again reminded of Al Smith, though his voice was not so deep or as assured. "Before I start," he said, "I want to answer accusations that have been made to the effect that I have been paid for my work in the Tolerance Committee of the South Bronx. I never have accepted, and never will accept, one penny for any of my work." ("Ha-ha!" shrilled a woman near the front, "Not much. Ha-ha!"). "I have done it," he continued steadily, "because I sincerely believe in the rightness of it, and that it is my duty to do so." He was interrupted again by such epithets as "Jew Stooge" and "Communist."

He spoke under as great a handicap as I have ever seen a man speak, for about ten minutes. Every statement was greeted by jeers from the crowd. His remarks were punctuated throughout by shrill comments from the women. (During the entire meeting I didn't hear a single male voice raised in either detraction or approbation.) At one point the Leader himself came to the microphone and appealed to his followers to hear Mr. McDonough through to the end. Members of the Mobilizers were stationed every six to eight feet throughout the hall, attempting to quiet those near them.

Mr. McDonough attempted to answer the charges that all communists were Jews. "Actually," he said, "only two percent of the entire enrollment of the Communist Party in the United States is of the Jewish race. This figure is quoted from the August, 1939, issue of *Fortune* magazine."

"A Jewish publication," a woman shrieked. I felt I was listening to a conversation rather than a speech.

"You claim that all Jews are internationalists and warmongers ["They are!"], that they are parasites draining a country dry and then moving on. I seem to recall a certain 'Babs' Hutton, an Aryan Christian American, who married a Russian Prince, married a Danish count, renounced her American citizenship and took her millions of dollars, made in America through the hard work of thousands of Amercan girls in the Woolworth five and ten cent stores, back to Europe. ["She's one in a million," a woman shouted.] Now with the situation as it is in Europe, she's back, trying to regain her citizenship, if she can." Here Mr. McDonough also mentioned J. P. Morgan, who, by his own admission at a Senate investigation, did everything in his power to get the United States into the last war, and J. P. Morgan is a Christian American.

"You claim the Jews are warmongers," he continued. "I say that the warmongers are the munitions makers. They are the people who stand to gain by a long war. And not one of the large munitions makers is a Jew!"

When the shrieking laughter had more or less subsided, he went on to say that the greatest of recent munitions makers, Basil Zaharoff, was not a Jew but a Greek.

Then Mr. McDonough made his gravest tactical error. He granted the hypothesis as true, for purposes of debate, that the Jew is a parasite, a crook and the born enemy of Christians. "Granting this," he said, "what would your own priests and ministers preach from their pulpits? What would Jesus Christ [he bowed his head] have said? He would have said, 'Love thine Enemy.' He preached tolerance and love. 'Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself,' He said. And I must remind you that He sprang from the very race that you despise. Jesus Christ was a Jew."

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This was a sore point with the Mobilizers. They shrieked and howled and some of them stood. Women's voices again, raucous and shrill. "That's a dirty lie!" "He was not!" "He was like hell!"

When the noise had lessened, the speaker said that he was not there to argue with individuals and that he would finish his speech. He did so haltingly, unconvincingly, with understandable confusion. The scattered applause of his few supporters could not counteract the tangible feeling of hatred that pulsed through the Tri-Boro Palace. He was licked and he knew it.

Joe McWilliams knew it too. He rose and stood silently before the microphone and smiled paternally, neatly pressed arms folded over his chest. A man behind him on the stage made frantic upward motions with his hands and the entire audience, with the exception of myself and the tolerance group members, rose and cheered. The sound washed, wave after wave, from the rear of the hall to the stage and the hair bristled on the back of my neck. It was such applause as this that I have heard in the news reels magnified a thousand times, when Herr Hitler has stood on a balcony overlooking some conquered *Platz* anywhere in Central Europe.

It will be impossible for me to quote Mr. McWilliam's speech in its entirety—first, because his allotted portion of the "debate" ran about an hour and a half, as contrasted with Mr. McDonough's ten minutes, and second, because I thought it unwise to take more than a few scattered, surreptitious notes in view of the temper of the audience. When I quote sections, as I have of the previous speeches, it is because I remember those sections almost verbatim.

He spoke, this National Commander of the Christian Mobilizers, as powerfully as any speaker I have ever heard. He had a soft voice (with a barely noticeable Texas drawl) over which he had perfect control. He would speak gently into the microphone, almost inaudibly, and then with a typical Hitlerian gesture of arms and hands, he would throw the whole power of his lungs and body into an almost hysterical tirade, magnetically pulling the cheers from his followers from their chairs.

"First," he said, "I'll take the last part of my opponent's speech about tolerance and show you where he's wrong, and then I'll go to the first part of his speech and disprove his claims, one, two, three . . ." He ticked them off on his fingers. "Of course, we're not tolerant. We've been tolerant too long. The two countries where the Jews have had the greatest freedom in the past century have been the United States and Germany. Germany discovered the menace of this Asiatic parasite and Hitler's driving them out. It's our turn next."

He rambled about his own youth in Texas where he "had never seen a Jew." He spoke of his brother and a friend who had been killed in the last war to swell Jewish profits. He spoke of coming East and selling an invention to a "Christian firm" in Newark. Shortly thereafter he had his first contact with Jews. He didn't hate them. They weren't like anybody he had ever seen before, but he didn't hate them. But then he had an experience. A Jew told him something and he believed it because in Texas men told the truth. If a Texan told you he was going to kill you, he'd do it. But he was rooked by this Jewish trickster and ever since that time he has found that a Jew could not be trusted. He has never heard a Jew speak sincerely or speak the truth. Every Jew in America wants us to get into the European war, to spill the blood of "our Christian youth," to regain Jewish property confiscated by Hitler.

Christ, he went on to say, never preached tolerance. He preached hate. Hate your enemy. Hate his sins. Kill him. Drive him out with a whip. He drove the Jewish moneychangers out of the temple with a whip because they were desecrating the House of God. "My opponent," he said softly, "claims that Christ was a Jew." He paused dramatically. "JESUS CHRIST WAS THE SON OF GOD!" He pointed his finger into space. "God was out there. How could He have been a Jew?" Here he was interrupted by the most prolonged, hysterical applause of the evening. "My friends," he continued smoothly, "Christ never preached tolerance. The Protestant ministers of this country don't preach His gospel. They preach a perverted gospel of tolerance, distorted by Jewish propaganda. And you should ask yourselves, how many of your own Catholic priests preach this same perverted Jewish gospel."

"But there is one"—his voice twanged with emotion—"one noble, courageous, fearless priest of God, Father Charles E. ....." The last name was drowned in a sea of noise. "My friends, the Jews who sat at the foot of Pilate were no different than those who have organized this radio system and appealed to the RFC to remove Father Coughlin from the air. In essence, there is no difference. What lived 2,000 years ago lives today just as it did then, and Father Coughlin is the truest carrier of the cross since Jesus Christ!"

The rest of the speech was in the same vein. What right had the mockies anyway to "hide behind the pure white cloak of Jesus?" It was desecration! Asiatic Jewry was at the base of all trouble in America. They were the communists; they were the vicious employers. They were the internationalists and the warmongers. They were the oppressors of everything Christian, the destroyers of everything fine. They controlled the press, the movies, the educational system and the government.

"All communists are not Jews. That is not the point. I have known Gentile communists. The point is this—communism is this. I spent five years studying it. Communism is nothing more nor less than Jewish philosophy, and Christians are perverted by it just as other Christians are perverted by tolerance. Communism is a wonderful thing. If you don't believe it, ask the Jews!"

He (McWilliams) was a Zionist. Anything, he said, to settle the Jews somewhere and get them the hell out of here. This country was founded by Christians for Christians. Christian blood was shed to throw off the yoke of England. The men who drew up the Constitution did not mean to give freedom to everyone. They meant only people of their own kind. Why else would there have been thousands of slaves in bondage when it was written? "The Jews," he said, "want to destroy

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Hitler to the last Irishman [Laughter]. Look what they did to Germany and what Germany had to do to them [Cheers]. They had to get rid of them, and so are we going to have to get rid of them. After we get rid of them, I want a world built on the specifications of Washington. I do not want any Asiatic Jew telling me what kind of country we should have. All I ask of the Jews is to let us be masters in our own house. It is as simple as all that."

As for Mr. McDonough, he quite believed him when he said that he had never accepted a penny for his work. Mr. McDonough would reap rich rewards after the next Jewish election. He didn't need payment now. And, he added, he was a fool to have come here anyway. He might have realized the reception he would receive from a group of self-respecting American Christians. And now would the "guests" kindly leave? The Mobilizers had organization work to do and would like to be alone.

I made my way to the door. I was sped on my way with the same mutterings and black looks that attended the tolerance people, and I looked apprehensively to see if any of the women were knitting. I passed through a phalanx of uniformed police in the hallway and went into the bar at one end of the dancehall on the second floor and ordered a beer. There was a loudspeaker in the hall, evidently connected to the mike upstairs, for suddenly a voice blared forth.

"Now that our honored guests have left us," it said laughingly, "We can get down to business."

It was a typical business meeting of any new organization. There were committees being formed. Neighborhood committees. If you are a true Christian Mobilizer, you will go out and ring doorbells. You will ask people to buy Christian. You will find new members. Members who will work. This will be the last public meeting of the Mobilizers. Those of you who don't have a card will have to get an application tonight. No admission after tonight without a card or an application for membership. There are questions on this application that you might not want to get into the wrong hands. I assure you (it was McWilliams speaking) that I will guard these with my life. *None of these applications will ever fall into the hands of the enemy.*

Then another voice was berating "the kike LaGuardia" and the Jewish Press (the *New York Times* and *World-Telegram* of that date) for accusing them of attempting to picket the Paulist Church. This was a lie. They had no intention of so doing, and it was just another instance of Jewish persecutions of white Christians. They demanded apologies from the pastor, the press, the mayor.

"We will now recite the pledge to the flag," a voice said finally. I walked to the door and stood hat in hand.

"I pledge allegiance," the voices said in unison, "to the flag of the United States . . . and to the Republic . . . for which it stands . . . one nation indivisible . . . with liberty . . . and justice . . . for all . . ."

I put on my hat and started down the stairs. But I stopped. There was another phrase in the pledge ringing down the stairwell that was new to me.

"Except the Jews," they were shouting.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

THE ARRIVAL of Hitler's diplomatic aide, Von Ribbentrop, at the Vatican to confer with the Pope on the Monday of Passion week arouses many speculations, surmises, guesses, rumors, great hopes and equally great fears, not only concerned with the course of the war and the fate of Finland, but also with even deeper and graver issues having to do with all humanity's future fate. The purple veils which yesterday in all Catholic churches throughout the world—except in those parts of the world where the Church no longer is permitted the free and full use of its liturgy—is a symbol not only of the sacred mystery of Lent, Passion and Holy Weeks and Good Friday and Easter—but also reminds us of the secular mystery which hangs like a poisonous, oppressive shadow of censorship and propaganda and lies and counter lies over all the news and discussions of the news emanating today from all the political and military centers of the world war and world revolution of which the separate struggles in China and Finland and central Europe are integral parts. Will an Easter resurrection of peace, or at least its real dawning, come when the veil of mystery is lifted? Or is the Good Friday tragedy of humanity to descend upon the world, with its Easter deferred until after vast slaughter and world-wide havoc have run their courses? At a moment when the best informed observers of our press and our government are manifestly unable to penetrate and elucidate the complex of confusing problems that face them as they watch the events unfolding in Rome and the Vatican and Moscow, Berlin, Paris, London, Stockholm and Helsinki, a remote commentator like the present writer, engrossed, as all thinking persons needs must be, in the new crisis in Europe, can but add a mere personal guess or speculation to the general discussion.

It seems to me, then, that we Americans should ponder the very realistic, common-sense view of the war and its probable results suggested in Mr. J. L. Benvenisti's article in last week's COMMONWEAL, "Britain and the Logic of War." He opened his very thoughtful essay with the remark that he is not "one of those who believe that the war will necessarily be the gateway to a better world simply because our sense of justice seems to demand that kind of consummation. The war as far as England is concerned will have achieved its purpose if it simply prevents the world from becoming a lot worse." And Mr. Benvenisti need not have confined the application of his words to his own country, for they have their lesson for other countries as well, our own nation among them.

Perhaps there is no country quite so persistently—or so perniciously—addicted to voicing a demand that international affairs should be moulded after the pattern of what our own sense of justice desires as the United States. We did so before, during and after the last great war, with highly lamentable results for all concerned. And we are again doing so, probably with the same future harvest of disappointment and frustration to be expected as we

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reaped before. We simply cannot seem to appreciate the hard fact that war is not the royal gateway to Utopia, but a hard, rough method of trying to escape from a fate that seems to those fighting to be even worse than war. In short, if the Allies can succeed in defeating the Nazis, and thrusting back the Bolsheviks into Asia with some reasonable certainty of keeping them there till their own people shake off the yoke of Bolshevism, the sensible people of Europe may well think the war justified, and need not expect the immediate advent of the reign of Perpetual Peace and Perfect Justice which is now being dreamed for them by so many committees and commissions of idealists on this side of the Atlantic. They will think a good job has been done, since it had to be done, and as they are the ones who must do the fighting and the paying, it would seem they should have the best right to name the conditions of the treaties that must follow the war.

I go back many times nowadays to the starkly commonsense pages of G. K. Chesterton in that chapter of his autobiography that deals with the last great war, as I read the announcements and hear the radio talks of the many groups of sheltered Americans who talk so much about the war in which Americans should lead the Europeans to a golden age, either by inducing them to make what they quaintly term a "negotiated peace" with Hitler immediately, or by building up the world again after the war on the model of the higher type of civilization that so conspicuously (to their dreamy gaze) prevails on this side of the Atlantic. "It is not the point to put wild and visionary questions about whether the world has been vastly improved by the war," wrote Chesterton; "whether Utopia or the New Jerusalem have come out of the war; to ask in that apocalyptic fashion what has come out of the war. *We* have come out of the war, and come out alive; England and Europe have come out of the war, with all their sins on their heads, confused, corrupted, degraded, but not dead. The only defensible war is a war of defense. And a war of defense, by its very definition and nature, is one from which a man comes back battered and bleeding and only boasting that he is not dead."

And as Chesterton went on in his incomparably lucid style to explain, those who after the last war thought too little of the cause of the Allies, and what they had achieved, were once those who had thought too highly, or too credulously, of what it ought to have been. Like H. G. Wells—a prime example of the wishful thinkers. "He began by calling the Allied effort The War That Will End War. He has ended by saying, through his rather equivocal mask of Mr. Clissold, that it was no better than a forest fire and settled nothing. It is hard to say which of the two statements is the more absurd. It settled exactly what it set out to settle. . . . We never promised to put a final end to all war or all work or all worry. We only said that we were bound to endure something very bad because the alternative was something worse. In short, we said what every man on the defensive has to say. Mr. Brown is attacked by a burglar and manages to save his life and property. It is hard to turn round on him and say, 'After all, what has come out of the battle in the back-garden? It is the same old Septimus Brown, with the same face, the same trousers, the same temper a little uncertain at breakfast, the same taste for telling the anecdote about the bookmaker at Brighton.' It is absurd to complain about Mr. Brown not being turned into a Greek god merely by being bashed on the head by a burglar. He had a right to defend himself; he had a right to save himself; and what he saved was himself, no better and no worse. It he had gone out to purify the world by shooting all possible burglars, it would not have been a defensive war. And it would not have been a defensible one."

My own guess, then, about the latest crisis in Europe is that the fight against the murderous burglars now attacking and looting peaceful nations will be continued; my hope is that it will succeed and has nothing to do with Utopia or the New Jerusalem.

Communications

RURAL LIFE

Oshkosh, Wisc.

TO the Editors: Your "Rural Life Number," March 1, is entitled to high commendation, and should cause your readers some serious thinking. To me the article by C. Edward Wolf is the most interesting because the most illuminating. It points to the farmer of the future, unless we become wise in time. He will be a tenant farmer. He must be a commercial farmer, for his chief purpose will be to meet his rent payments. He will not be moving from farm to farm as now, every one to five years; chiefly because that will not be good business for his landlord. The bankers and insurance companies will liquidate as they can, and farms will become a permanent investment for the natural individual money makers who desire a safe return of income at a moderately low rate based on higher capitalized value of land.

The tenants will operate on a smaller return; for the waste of frequent removals will be avoided, land will have better care, and competition among renters will be more keen. Poorer lands will come into use. The margin of production will fall to lower levels. A third class of farmers will separate itself—farmer workers, or "hands," or "cottagers," as they are known in Scotland, who will be seasonal workers for the better grade tenants, and will cultivate a "patch" of ground around their cottages for family supplies. Thus will the independent Iowa farmers, starting life on free or very cheap land three generations ago, have fallen to substantially the European standards and mode of life.

But what about the landlords? Some will live upon and manage their estates, and play golf. Some will live in nearby towns, engage in business, the professions, politics, sports, travel, club life, as their tastes dictate. All these will live on ground rent. And ground rent is an unearned income. It is the gift of nature which good land produces in excess of the living wages of worker or user of the land.

We say ground rent is an unearned income because it is not produced by any effort or activity of the land owner;

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but is a value due to the presence, needs and activities of population. It is not only the right but the duty of society to take ground rent for public purposes. No government can continue as a democracy while part of its people, the smaller part, absorbs the unearned ground rent, and also their share of the other incomes, wages and interest. These three, rent, wages and interest, constitute the entire national income. There is no possible solution of our national problem until ground rent is distributed to the entire population through services paid for from our public treasuries. The resulting free land will solve the farm and unemployment problems.

The little palliative experiments now advocated by well-meaning people do harm instead of good, by diverting attention from the evil of private ground rent, and delaying the study of fundamental causes. Ten or twelve billion dollars of annual ground rent absorbed by non-producers destroys by that amount the balance between production and consumption; and explains widespread poverty in the midst of vast surpluses of goods.

JOHN HARRINGTON.

CAMPAIGN FOR PRESIDENT

Woodmere, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I wonder how many shared my amazement at your cavalier attitude on the coming elections, as expressed in a March 8 editorial.

Few will deny that the New Deal is inadequate or that the Democratic Party is full of inconsistencies and machine politicians. But to maintain that the Republican Party might be almost as good and that really, after all, "they are too much alike for THE COMMONWEAL to antagonize thousands of its readers by hitching the wagon to either one"! Such ivory tower detachment! Such too, too brave impartiality!

I challenge the statement that there are "thousands" of Republicans read THE COMMONWEAL. In fact, I am anxious to find out how any man who is a Catholic and has read only the Popes' encyclicals can still give his support to the Republican Party, that unashamed champion of all that is economically, socially and morally anathema.

Although I agree that the coming elections will probably be screamingly funny, I don't think the American people are interested only in the laughs. They can't afford it. Many of them, at any rate, will be in there with both feet fighting for the New Deal, not because it is perfect, but because it has been at least a step in the right direction. Because it has given our dispossessed millions new hope, the right to join free unions, minimum wages, social security and the chance at least to keep working for a better world. Because it has at last recognized and practiced the Catholic principle that government should help the little fellow and restrain the bully.

Between Garner Democrats and Republicans it is true there is little to choose. And Franklin D. has his faults. But who else is going to protect the poor man's hard-earned gains? Who else is going to save us from the robber barons? Who else? In short, what's wrong with a third term?

JOHN C. CORT.

The Stage & Screen

The Fifth Column

IN AN ESSAY contrasting Ernest Hemingway with Prosper Mérimée, Mr. Wyndham Lewis asserts that the likeness of the two writers is self evident up to a point. Both of them worship force, and both cut their writing down to the bone and are master of spare dramatic statement. Here, however, according to Lewis, their similarity ends, as Mérimée, the inheritor of the Napoleonic tradition, is a protagonist of those who apply their force to others, while Hemingway expresses those to whom force is applied, those to whom things are done. In other words Mérimée is masculine, and Hemingway, despite all his male protestations, is at base feminine. This will of course be heresy to the Hemingway worshippers but the truth of it is evident to those who attend the performances of his first play "The Fifth Column." Mr. Hemingway's play has to do with the late war in Spain, and his chief character is an American newspaperman who is in the Government espionage service. There is also a love story concerning the newspaper man and an American girl, but it is a very weak and trite story indeed and proves that Mr. Hemingway has not yet learned how to write love scenes. Perhaps his admirers may say that this is a proof of his masculinity, but I doubt it.

The interesting portions of "The Fifth Column" concern the newspaperman in his relations to his fellow soldiers and to his superior officer, a Spanish general. They depict the soul of a neurasthenic thrown in contact with reality and detesting it. The play, despite its final scene in which a German revolutionist persuades the American to remain in Spain rather than desert, is not pro-Loyalist propaganda, though propaganda it certainly is—anti-war propaganda. We are told that Philip Rawlings is a pretty normal sort of chap, yet under the stress of war he shoots down an unarmed prisoner. We are told his superior officer was a simple teacher in peacetime, but we see him as cruel almost as the Spaniards of "Westward, Ho!" The scene between the General and Rawlings in which Rawlings, though he has just murdered one man, refuses to remain to witness the torture of another is the high spot of the play, an excellent piece of vibrant writing. This perhaps is masculine, but the spirit underlying it is not. Sadism is neither masculine nor feminine—it is inhuman. What is, however, distinctly non-masculine is the continual self-torture and complainings of Rawlings. Though he does use force on others, it is only because force is being used on him. Between times his lamentations rival those of Jeremias. Though in some scenes Hemingway shows that he can write dramatic dialogue, the success of the play, if success occurs, will be due to the admirable cast furnished by the Theatre Guild. Franchot Tone as the newspaper man, Arnold Moss as the Spanish General and Lee J. Cobb as the German soldier deserve special mention, but there are other excellent performances. Katherine Locke struggles bravely

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to make the girl interesting, and Lenore Ulrich gives a vivid picture of a Spanish girl of the people, or rather perhaps of the streets. Lee Strasberg's staging is also admirable. *(At the Alvin Theatre.)* GRENVILLE VERNON.

Full Week

"*STRANGE CARGO*" is a strange film, dominated by a "Third-Floor-Back" figure who strives to prove to six hardened criminals who escape from a Guiana Penal Colony that they are not so deeply steeped in sin that they cannot be saved. Last to be saved are Joan Crawford (who bravely faces the camera without make-up as a Mary Magdalen who joins these jail birds in their break through jungle terrors) and Clark Gable (the most tough and cynical of these men of the lowest depths). Although this film, directed by Frank Borzage with a mixture of strong, raw realism and make-believe, is much too long, it is so exciting during the thrilling escape episodes and so well acted, especially in supporting rôles, that it never grows tiresome.

It takes direction like Wesley Ruggles' and a good cast to make a gay movie like *"Too Many Husbands"* out of a thin, modern Enoch Arden story. The authors' witty lines (Claude Binyon wrote the screen play from W. Somerset Maugham's play) and music, used sparingly but well, help the humor along. Jean Arthur, with squeaky voice, looking like a million dollars as "our wife," enjoys her problem to the utmost while her two husbands act alternately like school boys and pheasant cocks in mating season. Melvyn Douglas, in his best style, as business-minded husband No. 2, puts over with gusto the funniest lines, including his description of adventurous Husband No. 1, (Fred MacMurray) as "handsome, selfish and unreliable." Unfortunately "Too Many Husbands" peters out when it can't find a solution.

Hollywood is rediscovering Booth Tarkington. Jackie Cooper, Betty Field and Norma Jean Nelson make vivid again the delightful story about Willie Baxter who took his seventeen years so seriously, whose life assumed new interest when a certain Baby Talk Lady came into it and whose chief embarrassment was his snoopy little sister. However efforts to modernize *"Seventeen"* with electric razors, radios and night clubs remind us that we've seen a lot of Andy Hardys, Henry Aldriches and other adolescents lately, and a 1940 Willie Baxter is just more of same. I stopped reading Tarkington during the Penrod series, so I never caught up with *"Little Orvie."* Seeing that film now will hardly make me return to Tarkington. John Sheffield plays the youngster engagingly enough, especially in Orvie's ideas, which ring true, but not in his speeches, which are man-made. Best portrayal is humorous Ernest Truex's as the father who understands his son, and his wife (Dorothy Tree) who is raising Orvie by the psychology books.

"Three Cheers for the Irish" is not my idea of what to see on Saint Patrick's Day. The film's promising beginning with Thomas Mitchell as a New York cop, soon fades into routine with Hollywood's usual conception of the Irish. It is too long, too conventional, to suit my taste.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Postscript & Introduction

By PHILIP BURNHAM

"IN THE OLD DAYS," Max Eastman writes,* socialism appealed to people with widely differing "patterns of volition." He lists three main groups: "first, the rebels against tyranny and oppression, in whose motivation the concept of human freedom formed the axis; second, those yearning with a mixture of religious mysticism and animal gregariousness for human solidarity —the united-brotherhood pattern; third, those anxious about efficiency and intelligent organization—a cerebral anxiety capable of rising in times of crisis to a veritable passion for a plan."

Max Eastman's "pattern of volition" is the first, the "radical libertarian," and he has arrived not only at a completely damning condemnation of Stalin's Russia (Part One: The Failure of the Russian Revolution), but at an honestly and most clearly stated repudiation of Marxism in general (Part Two: Socialism Reconsidered). This includes a farewell to the armed seizure of state power by a party of the proletariat and to the indiscriminate nationalization of productive property. But the sharp condemnation of Marxism is by no means *universal*. With a most persuasive spirit, he examines its different elements, and finds much he wants to retain as useful for truth and mankind, much especially connected with historical analysis and the class struggle.

Max Eastman never thought that Marxian philosophy as a metaphysics was "scientific," but this book shows how very far from the Marxian tradition his scientific empiricism has led him. The short and clear picture and analysis of the USSR as a betrayal of socialism and as evil in itself, includes, and is in a way crowned by, a description of the political and economic system built there for the exploitation of the people by the party bureaucracy. But the first criticism is not economic, is not Marxian at all. In checking the abandonment by Russia of the utopian type of socialism he himself believed in during the first years of the Soviet Union, the author says: "These three are vital—education, sex and family relations, and the stand on peace and war. With high intelligence abrogated in these spheres, we can cherish few extreme hopes in others." It must be recorded, unfortunately, that Max Eastman's "libertarian" approach, and his ideas of "high intelligence" in these and other fields are terrific, and hints in some places make them seem of a genuinely mad dog variety.

They are at least in interesting contrast to his views on the limitations of man's nature. The author's most emphasized objection to Marxism revolves around the Marxist "revolutionary optimism." The inevitable withering away of the state in a "society of the free and equal" after the revolution is classified correctly as a superstitious and anti-scientific assertion. "The fact is that Marx, owing to his belief that Reality-as-such is a dialectic pro-

* Stalin's Russia and the Crisis in Socialism. Max Eastman. Norton. $2.50.

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cedure toward something 'higher,' did not bother to define his end at all. . . . Historic changes . . . are still further limited by biological and psycho-physiological factors which, as Marx quite failed to realize, are hereditary."

By now, the tyrannical progress of socialism has been given a fairly routine formula, which this book puts forward clearly:

With the avowed purpose of emancipating the exploited and bringing freedom to all society (if the lowest class gets liberty, in the process thereof all the classes above inevitably and magically do likewise), Marx came out for dictatorship of the proletarian *class* as a necessary step to a co-operative socialist anarchy. Lenin with great genius developed the *party* of the class—of course integrated into the class—to take and exercise the dictatorship. Then Stalin, in tune to a disputable degree with Lenin and Trotsky, developed the *centralism* of the party, with all the dictatorship, freedom and sovereignty restricted to the central Politburo. Stalin built up the *Fuehrerprinzip,* and exercises a *personal autocracy.*

Displaying this progress, the book naturally goes into fascism. "There is too much dispute over the connotation of fascism for one simple formula to hold. We can as yet only point to all these traits which are common to the régime in Italy and Germany, and not to be found in even the most caste-ridden of democratic countries. I have counted twenty-two such traits, and I find that in all but two, the régime of Stalin equals or exceeds them." This list is one of the most practical sections of the book, and deserves particular notice by those interested in American fascism and communism. "The enemy of democracy and civilization is not any country but the totalitarian state of mind. And that state of mind is being most successfully introduced into the United States by the adherents and fellow-travelers of Stalin."

There is no possibility of going through this entire book here, since it is provocative even more than conclusive (and it is plenty conclusive), but one must signalize the destruction of our American "totalitarian liberals," who, as Stalin's party increased its force and character as a class of exploiters, have increasingly supported Stalin. The Comintern itself is nicely graphed and its history "looks like the death shudder of an expiring idea. . . . The idea was that a higher democracy could be arrived at by an anti-democratic revolutionary procedure. . . . The meaning of 'left' and 'right' in such a situation is not simple."

The Moscow trials really high-light this whole volume. They crystallize many problems in the most dramatic and tragic way possible. Max Eastman has them integrated into his whole philosophy as what they undoubtedly are: crimes and lies. They were politically and economically necessary for the completion of Stalin's monolithic tyranny and for his joining forces with other exploiters in other lands. For the victims, they were the final test of their beliefs. The whole Bolshevik material and mental structure put them in a position "with but one alternative, either to pronounce their life work a failure, or to admit that there was *some hope* for socialism and the workers in the régime, or after the régime, of Stalin. . . . They would not have made these confessions if Stalin had restored capitalism to Russia. He confused them, and the whole world, by modeling his counter-revolution on the fascist states." Russia still has productive property owned by the state. The victims cannot admit that that fact is no guarantee of utopia—that it is a terrible danger.

The confessions were deliberate lies, "revolutionary lies"—a fascinating concept. Max Eastman repudiates lying: "the clean rejection of it by a majority of mankind is necessary to the survival of civilization." He is not very appealing on why: "Without truth telling, without a complete, intensely scrupulous and meticulous inward and outward, mental and vocal, integrity, there can be no science." He pooh-poohs Lenin and Trotsky for claiming that the only alternative to "a belief that winning power for the Communist party justifies *any* means, regardless of the ideals of communism [Eastman does not quote this directly from them]," is a belief in supernatural or transcendental laws of morality. He does this too easily, simply by giving the development of "science" a religious and ultimate, a non-temporal and non-material position in his scheme.

He incidentally carries on the old canard about "Jesuitism" in the grossest terms, and utterly fails to take into account the Christian's belief (when he does not conform with it, he knows that is a sin) that he must be willing to accept real material failure—even the failure of what he is certain is the right temporal order—when success requires evil action, out of faith that just accounts are certain in eternity.

Altogether the radical empiricism of Max Eastman seems to involve either much of "metaphysical" degeneration, a thing he condemns in Stalinism, or else a religious core which he dismisses with unusual contempt. Clearly his call to action in the last chapter, "What to Do Now," is inadequate. The program appears mostly wise as far as it goes, but more than simply "emotional reorganization" must come first, and before anything very hopeful will actually be done. "Stalin's Russia" is an excellent and brilliantly written book, but it needs an additional volume.

More Books of the Week

Two Novels

Bethel Merriday. Sinclair Lewis. Doubleday. $2.50.

MR. LEWIS has always written to a pattern—or almost always. And it is a pretty sure-fire pattern. You pick a trade or profession, steep yourself in it, write a novel pack-jam full of its jargon, its local color. If you have Mr. Lewis's powers of observation and expression, his ability to suck up into himself all the things that give character to his theme, you are pretty sure to write an interesting novel.

"Bethel Merriday," like everything Sinclair Lewis has ever written, has that sort of interest. Some people will, perhaps, find it a little tedious because Bethel's trade—acting—doesn't appeal to them, but to anyone in the slightest degree stagestruck, to anyone who really cares anything for the theatre, the book will inevitably seem good.

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A reviewer is forced into comparisons. Is this latest opus as well done as "Arrowsmith," "Babbitt"? On the negative side one must admit that "Bethel Merriday" just hasn't got as much stuff in it as one expects of its author. What there is is of the old quality, but quantity is a definite part of Lewis's quality, and it is the quantity that is lacking. "Elmer Gantry," for example, covered a pretty wide range of the activities of a certain kind of evangelical preacher. "Babbitt" gives you about as complete a picture of a rotarian real estate man as you can stand. "Bethel Merriday" seems, by contrast, a pretty thin slice of an actress's possible variety of experiences. The heroine acts at college. She is an apprentice in a summer theatre. She goes through the ordeal of a road company that fails. And there the book ends, with Bethel back in New York starting rehearsals on a Broadway comedy. How would success affect her? And maybe a touch of Hollywood?

But on the positive side there is much to be said. Evidently the author himself loves and respects the theatrical profession. He sees its sillinesses, its petty jealousies, its real faults, but he loves it. So he approaches it as a lover rather than as a critic. The result is happy. There is none of the bitterness, the scorn that in some sense hurt many of his other novels. And then, too, the characters in this book seem to have a little more life, a little more humanity. One could not help feeling that Gantry and Babbitt and even Dodsworth were caricatures in some sense. Bethel Merriday is a very human girl with a passion for the stage. Of course Lewis cannot altogether deny his talent for subtle exaggeration. Mrs. Lumley Boyle, the wickedly clever, slightly alcoholic, utterly competent leading lady, with her incredibly awful dog, never quite existed on land or sea, yet always will exist so long as there is a theatre.

The plot of "Bethel Merriday," like most of Lewis's plots, counts for little. Indeed it is weaker, perhaps, than is usual with him. His heroine's "love-life" is in spots about as improbable as anything you can imagine. But if you like Lewis, you will forgive all that. His philosophy also seems to have mellowed a little. Less cracks, more gentle kidding seems to be the ticket, which may be a result of the author's growing older, may be the result of his love for the stage. In any case, a pleasant book.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE.

The Labyrinthine Ways. Graham Greene. Viking. $2.50.

BLAME it on the war if you will, but discussion of the Catholic novel is practically non-existent. Perhaps because there is so little to say outside of the special field of historical novels with Helen White, Willa Cather and others. François Mauriac one of the ablest writers of the day, has been confining himself to themes and characters too thwarted and warped for general significance. And "Invasion" by Maxence Van der Meersch, possibly the most notable Catholic novel of the past decade, has to do with demoralized humanity in German-occupied Flanders; it is with noteworthy exceptions a horrifying picture.

Subnormal humanity under unusual conditions is also the subject of Graham Greene's latest book, which deals with religious persecution in a Mexican state in the interior where ignorance and disease, cruelty and treachery and jails and hovels are foremost. One priest character, Father José, marries to save his skin; the other, who is often drunk, has a child. Yet this "whiskey priest" refuses to abandon the people. Always pursued, he goes from village to village, absolving and baptising, and when he can get wine in spite of bone dry prohibition, saying Mass. He knowingly journeys to certain death for fear of refusing to bring absolution to a dying desperado. The wretched peons are far from paragons of virtue, but they will not betray the priest even to save one of their number being taken off as a hostage to be shot. This is a strong drama of sin and salvation that only a Catholic can completely understand.

What would Mr. Greene do with a less remote environment? His style is a model for economy of phrase. He is a master in the art of suspense. He seems to have the gift of understanding. Whether his character is a gringo dentist gone to seed, a brutal police lieutenant, a little boy reacting against pietist family pressure, a brave, resourceful little girl in a foreign land, or a truly humble "whiskey priest," it seems to make little difference. All speak for themselves convincingly; they are not easily forgotten. Graham Greene is a man to watch.

EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Shanghai: City for Sale. Ernest O. Hauser. Harcourt. $3.00.

IN 1842 a British force took Shanghai. By 1942, infers Mr. Hauser, the last embers of hope in this city as a world stronghold of Western commerce will be dead.

The admiral of the British expedition that opened Shanghai voiced a very worthy sentiment in his proclamation to the Chinese people. "Under the canopy of heaven and within the circumference of the earth," he said, "many are the different countries. Of the multitude of these, no one is there that is not ruled by the Supreme Heavenly Father, nor are there any that are not brethren of one family. Being then of one family, very plain is it that they should hold friendly and brotherly intercourse together, and not boast themselves one above the other."

That these lofty words have not characterized the relations of Shanghai's Westerners with the Chinese, Mr. Hauser demonstrates. There have been eighty years "of foreign arrogance and injustice," marked until 1917 by an opium traffic which at its height represented for British India nine million pounds yearly through Shanghai and other Chinese ports. In later decades there have been distressing labor conditions in Shanghai mills.

During the twenties, China's awakening began to weaken the position of Westerners in Shanghai. The "massacre" of May 27, 1925, was the outstanding incident of this decade. During the thirties, then, "death was delivered to Shanghai in two installments," says Mr. Hauser, by the two attacks of the Japanese. Regardless of whether Japan or China gains supremacy in the East, the Western powers will no longer conduct this enclave in utter defiance of four hundred million Chinese and seventy million Japanese.

If China and Japan free themselves of the West, what of the Church? Undoubtedly in many Oriental minds it is linked with the story of Western aggrandizement during this last century, but for these past twenty years in particular, careful efforts have been made to correct this erroneous impression. Archbishop Costantini deserves great credit for his labors on this score, while Papal Delegate at Peking. However, Mr. Hauser does not touch on the religious effects of the eclipse of the West in the East. Engagingly he describes only that brilliant arc in the sky, the rise and decline of Western-World Shanghai.

JOHN J. CONSIDINE.

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"62," Biography of a Union. Harry Lang. International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. $3.00.

THIS IS a very well written, almost thrilling, account of the blood and tears and struggle that lie behind the manufacture of the glamorous negligees and nightgowns that are so important to the modern woman's well-being. It is a historical record of Local 62 of David Dubinsky's famous Ladies' Garment Workers, the largest all-woman local in the world.

In 1911 a loft occupied by the Triangle Waist Company on the lower East Side caught fire, and within 15 minutes 146 young women, "white goods" workers, had been either burned to death or killed in the nine-story leap to the ground. They could not escape because the doors had been locked—locked against union organizers.

In those days such workers received $1 to $3 a week for 10, 12 and even 14 hours a day—and had to provide their own needles besides. Now after 30 years of strikes and endless negotiation the union has raised wages to $18 and $21 minimums, lowered the work-week to 37½ hours.

Local 62 is another of the garment unions founded by radical Jewish immigrants and raised on sound Marxist doctrine that have come to be prize examples of the advantages of "constructive cooperation" between capital and labor. It is no exaggeration to say, in fact, that these unions probably have the most Catholic policy of any in the country (notwithstanding the large number of pseudo-Catholic labor leaders).

Of these eminently practical idealists and ex-Marxists the author is typical. A former organizer for 62 himself, he is now a labor editor on the *Jewish Daily Forward.* The surprising thing about Mr. Lang is not that he writes movingly about the girls he once helped lead in the crucial general strike of 1913, or even that he should be so strong for union responsibility and class cooperation, but rather that a man with his Marxist background should retain so much of the deep religious feeling and Messianic spirit of his ancestors.

At any rate, it makes another reason why "62" is both good labor history and good reading. JOHN C. CORT.

Heil Hunger: Health under Hitler. Martin Gumpert. Translated by Maurice Samuel. Alliance. $1.75.

IT WAS WHAT happened behind the German battle lines, the privation of the people, that determined the end of the last Great War. Hence one of the most interesting questions in the world today is, "What is happening now behind the German lines?" This book to a large extent supplies that answer, which is this, "For six years Germany has lived under what amounts to war conditions, and is today found in such a weakened state that it is doubtful if her people can, from a physical standpoint, endure much more privation."

Doctor Gumpert, the author, is a physician and surgeon, formerly of Berlin, now living in New York. His information is gathered from the documents of the Nazi government itself, and shows the serious conditions that are developing as a result of the degeneration of the health of the German people. He treats such subjects as the increase of drunkenness in Germany, though Hitler is a teetotaler; and the striking increases in suicide and lunacy, as well as in veneral disease, that are taking place among the people. German medical and public health work has meant much for the reduction of the death rate from tuberculosis, but that is a thing of the past. The number of cases of the disease is rising, while the treatment offered by the State institutions is less and less adequate. We owe a great deal of our knowledge of diphtheria to the magnificent research work accomplished in Germany that has enabled other countries like our own practically to wipe out this scourge of children in city life, as it used to be only a generation ago. Yet beyond the Westwall today the number of cases of diphtheria and other contagious diseases is mounting, and the resistive vitality of the people is sadly lessened because of starvation. Doctor Gumpert's book is a most interesting outline of the significance of the health problems of war-torn Europe.

JAMES J. WALSH.

The Mad Dog of Europe. Albert Nesor. Epic. $2.50.

IN THIS somewhat sensational narrative, the history of Hitler's rise to power is interwoven with the story of the simple God-fearing Germans of a Bavarian village.

The tone of the book is sincere and proves that the author feels deeply the agony that the Nazi rule has caused so many of its victims. There is a real attempt in the first chapters to show how the despair of Germany made it ready to listen to promises of better days. But after Hitler enters the story it becomes full of bitterness and hatred, though it probably does not contain one incident that cannot be paralleled in real life. The book cannot be recommended as possessing either literary or historical value, yet it may bring home to the casual reader the reality of the dark story of Nazi treatment of its enemies and opponents. M. M. L.

RELIGION

The First Four Things. R. H. J. Steuart, SJ. Longmans. $1.35.

AGAIN Father Steuart gives us a precious little book—eighty-five pages of compact, lucid, charming disquisition on the knowledge of God, knowledge of Christ, Faith, and Prayer. It is admirable for putting into the hands of beginners or enquirers. In the chapter on faith we have an inspiring explanation of evil and pain, wherein God's very likeness shines through: "there are no happenings in the lives of men or things, of individuals or families or nations, but move inevitably as He directs and to the end that He has set. . . . We are free, but our very freedom is His creature and His likeness. . . . Even the very reprobate have their life from Him." The "dissonances and stridencies are merged and lost in Him." Prayer teaches us this, and makes us realize that indeed He it is who prayeth within us. RICHARD FLOWER.

Christ the Life of the Soul; Christ the Ideal of the Monk; Christ in His Mysteries. Abbot Marmion, O. S. B. Herder. $2.75 *each.*

IT IS PERHAPS unwise to make universal prescriptions for a person's spiritual reading. None the less the reissue in a cheaper—if, from a material viewpoint, not at a "popular" price—edition of these works of the late Abbott Marmion is worthy of wide notice, particularly during this Holy Season of Lent. The beloved Benedictine spiritual adviser and retreat master has an approach so objectively doctrinal and liturgical that it would attract the widest range of temperaments. Abbott Marmion uses the basic teachings of the Church as a guide to the spiritual life; on occasion he also reaches heights of eloquence and personal fervor. Those not yet familiar with his works would do well at least to examine "Christ the Life of the Soul." E. S.

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LISTED on these pages are the messages of leading Catholic colleges and schools. They will be glad to send you their catalogs. In writing to or calling on schools represented here, please mention THE COMMONWEAL.

The Inner Forum

ON MARCH 6 the National Council of Catholic Women celebrated its twentieth anniversary. The original purposes, as outlined by the late John J. Burke, C.S.P., before the first meeting, were: "First to give to Catholic women of the country a common voice and an instrument for united action in all matters affecting Catholic or national welfare. 2. To insure proper Catholic representation on, and the proper recognition of Catholic principles in, national committees and national movements affecting the religious, moral and material well-being of the country. 3. To stimulate the work of existing Catholic women's organizations to greater service and usefulness in meeting the needs of our time."

At the first meeting in Washington, 126 voting delegates from 45 dioceses and archdioceses were present. Today there are 63 diocesan councils of the NCCW, and 17 national organizations, 35 state organizations and 3,500 local units have affiliated with the national council. One of the first responsibilities the new organization undertook was to reorganize the war-emergency school of social service, which as the National Catholic School for Social Service has since sent out 450 trained workers to various parts of the United States and to twelve foreign countries.

The adoption of the national committee system has enabled the NCCW to serve as a clearing house for invaluable data in various fields such as: religious education, parent-teacher associations, parent and family education, study clubs, libraries, immigration, industrial problems, international relations, shrines and others. National headquarters also serves as an information bureau on legislation; hundreds of inquiries from affiliated organizations are received weekly.

Father Burke said at one of the annual NCCW conventions: "Our task is no easy one. We must study and we must know the problems. Our own work, whatsoever we do, must, in its integrity and its standards, be beyond reproach. We must work in the world, for the world, with the world. We must in a united way know and profess principles that many in the world resent because they are a restraint on the powers of this world and of the worldly. Yet our joy is this, that we seek to bring Christ into the hearts of men and make more real, more actual the brotherhood whereby He has blessed us."

CONTRIBUTORS

Rt. Rev. John A. RYAN, author of many books, is the head of the Social Action Department, NCWC.

Rev. Richard FLOWER, O.S.B., is a monk of St. Anselm's Priory, Portsmouth, R. I.

Theodore MAYNARD is a poet, essayist, historian; his last book is a life of Saint Vincent de Paul.

Lawrence PHELAN was born in the Bronx, now lives in New Jersey. He writes short stories and essays, is in the oil business.

Rev. John J. CONSIDINE is Assistant General of the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America (Maryknoll Fathers).

John C. CORT is one of the founders of the ACTU.

James J. WALSH, M.D., is the author of many books, of which the best known is probably "Thirteenth, the Greatest of Centuries."

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